Governor's Brucellosis Coordination Committee Minutes
May 20, 2004

Pinedale Entertainment Center

Attendees:
Terry Cleveland, Bret Combs, Albert Sommers, Dave Roberts, Cathy Purves, Ken Mills, Terry Pollard, Tom Thorne, Monte Olsen, Donal O'Toole, Erika Olsen, Shawn Madden, Frank Galey, Jim Wilson (for Jim Logan), Rob Hendry, Bill Williams, Joel Bousman, John Etchepare, John Keck, Scott Werbelow, Bob Wharff, Bill Lambert, John Hines, Brent Larson, David Barber (for Karl Musgrave), and Brad Mead.

Minutes:
Because the minutes from the last meeting were in disarray, the Team decided not to vote on them and agreed to submit written comments on the minutes to help finalize them for a vote at the next meeting.

Housekeeping:
The report was discussed. The report will focus on the recommendations and will be brief. Dr. Galey highlighted the focus for the meeting.

Dr. Tom Linfield – Discussion and Status Review of GYIBC Efforts:
Dr. Galey introduced Dr. Tom Linfield, chairman of the Executive Committee of the GYIBC, to discuss the history and advances of the GYIBC. Dr. Linfield highlighted GYIBC's efforts and limitations. Sen. Hines asked Dr. Linfield about how GYIBC's recommendations are implemented. Dr. Linfield identified the Executive Committee as the group that filters and approves the group's recommendations. Drs. Thorne and Linfield noted that the primary function of the GYIBC is to serve in an advisory role, in light of the lack of actual authority.

Representative Monte Olsen – Communicating with Legislative Committees:
Rep. Olsen mentioned that he and Erika Olsen sent all Brucellosis-related statutes to the Team. Rep. Olsen encouraged the Team to report to the Interim Agriculture and Travel, Recreation and Wildlife Legislative Committees on a regular basis to keep the Legislature informed of the Team's progress. Rep. Olsen wanted to make sure that the Legislature was fully aware of the Team's efforts. Rep. Olsen encouraged communicating meeting dates and times to Legislators through LSO.

July Meeting:
The meeting on July 19, 2004 will be a full meeting. July 20, 2004 will involve a tour of a feedground and will leave at 9:00 AM.

GIS Brucellosis Mapping in Montana – Becky Frey (USDA-APHIS):
Ms. Frey's presentation highlighted the use of GIS mapping to help counter disease. The focus of the GIS mapping was whether APHIS could use spatial mapping to track and represent risk factors for Brucellosis. Ms. Frey noted the importance of a database and

communicating data with partner agencies. The GIS mapping was used to highlight risk factors, namely: proximity to YNP, elk and bison winter range locations, US Forest Service allotment locations, seroprevalence rates in elk and the location of elk and bison

calving grounds. Ms. Frey then detailed the tools used to create the database and maps. These tools included: interviews, updating biological layers on a regular basis and addressing and maintaining risk factor assessment and ranking. Maintaining the database was also explored. In this regard, the importance of using cooperative agreements with partner agencies for information sharing, communicating with producers, and hiring dedicated personnel to the program and its maintenance was noted. Particular examples from Montana were then presented.

GIS Brucellosis Mapping in Wyoming - Brandon Scurlock (WGFD):
Mr. Scurlock provided a basic orientation for the group regarding where the feedgrounds are in Wyoming. The feedgrounds are located near the high elevation areas, to keep elk from migrating down to cattle allotments and private lands. Mr. Scurlock noted the use of precipitation data (rainfall, snowfall, etc.), herd unit locations, elk migration routes, elk parturition grounds, crucial winter range and private land overlays to produce maps. The Brucellosis Feedground Habitat (BFH) program was then discussed, with Mr. Scurlock noting the high rate of turnover in the AWEC biologists in the program as a possible point of discussion for the Team. Elk parturition and cattle grazing overlap was then discussed in the context of monitoring for commingling. Mr. Scurlock then went on to detail habitat improvement projects in the area and the use of these projects to reduce the amount of time the elk are on the feedgrounds. Sublette County was then used as an example to show how the maps can be generated, using the overlays mentioned previously (winter range, parturition areas, grazing allotments, grazing allotments, etc.). The uses of the maps included: to delineate areas of potential conflict and to identify areas of potential opportunity.

Team Questions – GIS Presentations:
The Team then asked Ms. Frey and Mr. Scurlock questions surrounding: the difference between "good" and "bad" feed grounds, evaluation and monitoring of the utility of the various feedgrounds, the history of the feedgrounds and their locations, habitat improvement projects, the feasibility and utility of using habitat improvement to reduce reliance of feedgrounds, WGFD's evaluation of feedgrounds as being "high risk," "low risk" etc. and whether such an evaluation would be possible (how many other "Muddy Creek's" are out there?), whether there are individual management plans for each feedground and whether the plans are developed with landowner involvement (the Team decided that the involvement of a broad range of groups in the creation of the individual management plans should be explored – Mr. Cleveland noted that the Wildlife Committee was going forward with this recommendation), the amount of data (serology, etc.) that is available to do proper analysis and mapping, holes in the data that WGFD would like to see filled (from WGFD - where cattle feedlines are on private land, proximity to cattle feedlines on public lands, stackyard locations), the utility of knowing the areas of damage historically (locations), the notion of WGFD buying and holding (banking) allotments for use in conflict reduction (trading one allotment for another in a

high risk area, etc.), what constitutes a valid test sample (compare seroprevalence from previous years and it yield a number that has 85% reliability – usually 30-50 elk), the need for more and better quality catch corrals (traps), where opportunities exist for

habitat improvement (conservation easements, purchase, etc.), what is an acceptable level of seroprevalence in elk (3.9%, more?, less?, 5% trigger), and ranking and rating risk factors. The need for habitat improvement projects in the area was alsodiscussed by the group. Senator Hines added that habitat banking and other alternative forms of providing additional habitat might need to be explored.

Committee Reports:
Wildlife: Mr. Cleveland solicited information from the Committee regarding individual management plans for feedgrounds. Based on the information from the Committee, Mr. Cleveland has directed the WGFD to start compiling these plans using a more broad range of sources to develop the plans (ranchers, etc.). Mr. Cleveland has also asked Dr. Thorne to start thinking about other management practices that would be helpful.

Human Health: Dr. Barber noted that Dr. Musgrave had sent out an Excel spreadsheet detailing the 138 case reports of human Brucellosis cases since 1929 and the limited data surrounding them. Dr. Barber also indicated that the Committee would be able to start drafting a report when the form for that report is finalized. The Committee has four general areas that they will address in its report.

Livestock: The Team will be focusing on best management practices in the present meeting, so the Livestock Committee report was presented during latter portion of the meeting.

Regulatory: The Livestock Board perspective of the Brucellosis issue was related by Mr. Wilson.

Brucellosis in Cattle – Best Management Practices – All Suggestions:

<u>Herd Health</u>
-Necropsy of aborted and weak calves (full work-up on any abortion)
-Better Coordinate turn-out dates between agencies and livestock producers
-Continue calf-hood vaccination in eligible cattle statewide with priority in "risk area"
-Vaccinate adult cattle in "high risk" areas
-Monitor calving rates (%) in cattle
-Any "open" bred cow should be tested for Brucella
-Pregnancy check every cow and cull every cow which is "open." Ship "open" cows if you do not know the reason for it being "open." (Exceptions for predation or other known reasons like weather, etc.)
-Feed and calve in areas which are not in close proximity to feedgrounds
-Notify WGFD upon any recognition of commingling
-Test and sell all "open" cows in June
-Know source of replacement heifers

-Maintain official ID on cattle
-Segregate cow who aborts from the herd

Transmission from Wildlife
-GIS Mapping of Risk Factors and Cattle
-Discern other "risk factors"
-Provide GIS data to producers and federal land management agencies to allow them to avoid risk factors
-Keep and improve feedgrounds
-Expanded fencing around fencing
-Develop Individual Feedground Management Plans
-Elk/Cattle separation during critical periods of transmission of susceptible cattle
-Minimize elk feeding operations where socially and economically feasible
-Define "commingling" to be actual "mixing" with cows
-Vaccinate elk with best available vaccine to reduce abortion and reduce transmission
-"Elk-Proof" Fence livestock stackyards
-Fence cattle feedlines
-Continue habitat improvements
-Feed cattle and elk off the ground

Surveillance
-Continue to test all "test eligible" cattle as currently required by Livestock Board Regulations
-Share information and data among agencies and producers
-Continue testing at auction barns after "free" status is regained
-Systematic testing of elk herds for seroprevalence
-Continue to test animals from "high risk" areas after regaining "free" status upon change of ownership
-Test and monitor upon transfer of cattle from "high risk" area upon any movement from that area
-Promote coordination with APHIS and the state in developing and promoting "certified" Brucellosis "Free" herds and coordinate with individual herd management plans
-Economic impact statement relative to elk herd reductions

Other Recommendations
-Ask Governor to fund GIS mapping in the interim from Natural Resources Policy Account
-Solicit producers to work on pilot project with WGFD so that their primary occupation is to provide winter habitat for elk
-Improved vaccine efficacy and/or create new vaccine
-Need estimate of cost of loss of "free" status to know the importance of what the Team is doing
-Additional funding/staffing to deal with commingling
-Computerize brand records to facilitate traceback

-Need capture and bleed facilities at all feedgrounds
-Need federal veterinarian in Sublette County
-Removal of positive elk from populations

-Put VMO in Sublette County
-Clean up feedgrounds after feeding season

Team Approved Best Management Practices

Herd Health
-Test any cow that aborts for Brucellosis
-Submit any aborted fetus to the Vet Lab for Brucellosis testing
-Segregate any cow that aborts from the herd
-Any "open" cow that is retained should be tested
-Test and sell "dry" cows before breeding
-Cull every cow which is "open" and ship cows which do not bring home a calf (for unknown reasons)
-Producers should avoid elk and bison calving areas when possible
-Continue to calfhood vaccinate eligible cattle statewide
-Enforce regulations regarding Brucellosis vaccination of commuter cattle
-Vaccinate adult cows in "high risk" areas (in coordination with appropriate officials)
-Monitor calving rate percentages in cattle
-Feed and calve in areas which are not in close proximity to feed grounds
-Notify the Game and Fish Department immediately upon commingling
-Know source of replacement heifers
-Maintain official identification on cattle (current metal identification system)

Transmission from Wildlife
-GIS mapping of risk factors, land patterns, parturition areas, elk damages areas, feedgrounds, seroprevalence of elk herd unit, cattle feeding areas, type of cattle operation, location of hay stackyards, history of cattle and elk herd disease, habitat improvement areas, migration lines, allotments, land ownership, climate, crucial winter range, etc.
-Sharing of all applicable data among stakeholders, including: Livestock Board, APHIS, producers, WGFD, area veterinarians, Wyoming Department of Agriculture, public, etc.
-Construct additional fences to help reduce commingling

Other Issues to Be Discussed Later
-At the present time, continue to utilize feedgrounds to help reduce commingling

Because time ran out on the discussion, the group was advised to consult the exhaustive list of BMPs and bring comments to the June meeting. The BMPs will then be forwarded to the Livestock Committee via the Minutes.

Motion by Monte Olsen:

Dr. Galey is authorized to draft a letter to request funding, from the Governor's Natural Resources Policy Account or another appropriate source of funding, after soliciting input

on data need from the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, the University of Wyoming and other partners, to help create a detailed GIS map to help support the Brucellosis Coordination Team's efforts to meet the Governor's charge.

Rob Hendry Seconded

Vote was unanimous.